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SUBJECT: GAMBARI PLANS JULY TRIP TO BURMA

REF: USUN 470

Classified By: Ambassador Alejandro Wolff for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Special Adviser Ibrahim Gambari asked to meet P-3 Deputy PermReps June 13 to report that he is currently in discussions with the Burmese, Indians and Chinese on the timing and substance of his next trip to Burma, although he does not yet have a concrete date. Gambari speculated the earliest he could travel would be the second or third week of July because the Burmese did not want him to visit while the United States holds the Security Council Presidency during the month of June. He said both the Chinese and the Indians are pushing the Burmese for "tangible results for all of Gambari's efforts." Gambari also told the P-3 that the Secretary-General seeks to "broaden and deepen" the Gambari good offices mission, and reported that SYG Ban intends to become more personally involved in Burma (see reftel).

¶2. (C) Amb Wolff told Gambari that the regime took advantage of the period after the cyclone to push its political agenda. To illustrate his point, he raised the extension of Aung Sun Suu Kyi's house arrest, the recent press reports calling for her flogging, and the regime's disregard for SYG Ban's call to postpone the referendum. Amb Wolff emphasized that Gambari should return to Burma no later than July, in particular to see ASSK. Regarding SYG Ban's personal engagement on Burma, Amb Wolff stressed the importance of Ban capitalizing on -- not replacing -- Gambari's efforts so that the Burmese do not ignore Gambari's efforts. He noted SYG Ban's willingness to brief the Security Council on Burma during the Council's monthly lunch with the SYG June 23, but emphasized that the United States remained interested in Council action on Burma.

¶3. (C) French DPR LaCroix echoed Amb Wolff's concern about Ban's engagement. He also cautioned Gambari to move forward carefully with any economic elements of his plan, noting that the cyclone had "changed the profile" of economic assistance in Burma. LaCroix added that the regime may try to use its economic needs to push Gambari on an economic track before addressing important political issues. UK DPR Pierce said that the regime sees the referendum as obviating the role of ASSK and the NLD. She added that, in the wake of the hurricane, the regime is back stepping because "they think we won't take them on" and proposed a Friends meeting to "show them that is not the case."

¶4. (C) Gambari agreed that SYG Ban's involvement should not replace the good offices efforts. He also recognized the risk of engaging on economic reforms with the regime and said LaCroix was "on the ball" in his analysis of the situation. He added, however, that the only way to find out how the regime will respond is to engage. Gambari reported that he had attended a June 11 lunch hosted by the Indonesian PermRep, which included the PermReps of India and China. According to Gambari, during the discussion these Ambassadors expressed concern about "confusing" the humanitarian and

political tracks, but all agreed on the need for Gambari to visit. He emphasized that his next visit can't be like his visit in March, which yielded no results.  
Khalilzad